

History and Development of

Children's Literature in Hindi

CHILDREN'S literature is neither propaganda literature of a political, social or religious organization nor is it motivated by the urge for self-expression for self-satisfaction. It is the outcome of a conscious and deliberate effort to give expression to the emotions and thinking of those who cannot express themselves.

A writer for children must possess a good knowledge of the world, because the child is so inquisitive by nature that he wants to know all about everything at once and even the latest book of knowledge cannot satisfy him. On the other hand, the writer must also be as ignorant of the world as a child is and become a child himself. He has to look at things from a child's point of view and have the same curiosity about life as a child has. Then, he has to give expression to what a child feels and thinks in exactly the same language that a child will use. In writing for children if even a word is out of place, repugnant or incomprehensible to the reader, he will not only throw away that book but, may be discouraged from reading any other book.

The writer's task is thus a Herculean one, which is why very few writers have really been successful in writing for children and quite a high percentage of books levelled at children are not actually so. This is one reason why, publishers complain, the children's books published by them do not sell well.

History of Children's Literature in Hindi

Since the dawn of civilization, children, in any human society which has a language, have had some kind of literature meant especially for them. Lullabies have been sung to them and as one writer put it, they are as old as the Mother herself. Poems and stories have also been passed on to children from generation to generation in the form of folk songs and stories. They are found in abundance in all the dialects of Hindi — Brij Bhasha, Avadhi, Bhojpuri, Bundelkhandi, Chhattisgarhi etc.

The history of Hindi literature is divided into four periods. If we look at it from the point of view of children's literature, we find that in Veeragatha Kal (1050 to 1375 A.D.) there was a poet, Jagnik, who wrote *Allaha Khand*, a long story-poem on the chivalrous deeds of Allaha and Udal, two great warriors. It became so popular with the people that it was recited by bards to the village folk assembled in a *chaupal* or under a tree, particularly during the rainy season, and also thrilled young listeners, who remembered some parts of it which proved entertaining literature for them.

Amir Khusro (1253 to 1328 A.D.) was another poet of that period who has written some verses which have been very popular with children. They have a hidden meaning and it is not revealed all at once. They

ponder over the meaning and are delighted when they come to it. One of these verses for example is:

*Ek thal moti se bhara
Sab ke sir per ulta dhara
Charon or vah thali phire
Moti us se ek na gire.*

(There is a plate full of pearls. It is put upside down on everybody's head. The plate is revolving yet not a single pearl falls down.)

The hidden meaning of this verse of course, is the sky.

In Bhakti Kal (1375 to 1700) we have Surdas, who is said to be the poet of *Vatsalya Rasa* (Love for children). He has described the childhood of Krishna in the form of sweet short lyrics. Some of these lyrics deal with the emotions and feelings of children. In one of the lyrics Krishna says, 'Mother! Daoo (elder brother) teased me very much.' He says — 'You are the one purchased from some one. Yashoda (mother) never gave birth to you!'

In another lyric, Krishna was playing with some other children. He lost the game and was annoyed with them. At this, one of the playmates said, "Nobody is anybody's friend in the game. You are annoyed and showing your superiority to us only because you have a few cows more than us at home."

No other poet in Hindi has dealt with the child's psychology in his poems with such a deep insight. Surdas is therefore said to be the first children's poet in Hindi. But Krishna was not only an ordinary child to him. He was an incarnation of the Almighty — the Lord. The distance between the Lord and the devotee had to be maintained. Surdas, being essentially a devotional poet, could not depict the feelings and emotions of an ordinary child. His child was a superior human being and Surdas was his devotee.

During Reeti Kal (1700 to 1900) most of the poets were court poets of feudal lords. They were concerned with pleasing their

lords by jugglery of words and arousing their base erotic emotions and cared more for rhetoric and rules of composing poetry. Poetry was not a spontaneous overflow of powerful emotions for them. They could not be expected to write anything for children. Yet there were some poets like Lal Bujhakkar, Girdharkavi Rai and Rahim who wrote for the common man and some of their poems proved useful to children also. Lal Bujhakkar's short humorous poems were very amusing. In one of his poems he described village folks greatly surprised at seeing the big round foot prints of some animal in a field. They could not deduce that they were the footprints of an elephant. Lal Bujhakkar told them:

*'Lal Bujhakkar bujhta aur na
bujhe koi
Pair men chakki bandh ke harina
kooda hoi*

(Only Lal Bujhakkar knows and none else. A deer must have walked through the field with a big mill-stone tied to its feet.)

Children are naturally greatly amused by such poems.

In the last half of the nineteenth century (Reeti Kal) there was a poet Bhar-tendu Harish Chandra (1850 to 1885) in Banaras, who did not deviate from writing poetry in the old traditional style of Reeti Kal but was a pioneer in writing prose in which was the spoken language of the elite of the day. With the advent of British rule in India a need was felt for educating children in a commonly understood language. That language was neither Brij nor Avadhi in which Sur and Tulsi had written. It was Khariboli Hindi. Christian Missionaries had already adopted this language as most suitable for propagating their religious ideas.

Prof. Gilchrist of Fort William College, Calcutta, inspired some Hindi writers to prepare readers for school children. A School Book Society was established in

1833 with the object of publishing books for children. Laloo Lal, Sadal Misra and Raja Shiv Prasad were most prominent writers who wrote stories and essays to educate children. Laloo Lal's two story books *Sinhasan Battisi* and *Baital Pachisi* were quite interesting to children. Sadal Misra's *Nachiketopakhyan* though not written particularly for children, was also readable. Raja Shiv Prasad was an Inspector of Schools. He was directly concerned with the education of children. He wrote several books for children, some of which were *Raja Bhoj Ka Sapna*, *Bachcho Ka Inam*, *Larki Ki Kahani*.

With this background, Bhartendu Harish Chandra's writings proved to be epoch-making. He is said to be the father of modern Hindi prose and the whole period till the beginning of the twentieth century goes by the name of Bhartendu Yug in the history of Hindi literature. He has written some dramas for adults which were equally enjoyed by children. He did not write anything especially for children but some of his writings became very popular with them also. To quote an example, his *Churan Ka Latka*, a dialogue in verse in one of his dramas '*Andher Nagari*', was very popular:

*Churan avval Vaid ka bhari
Jisko khate Krishna Murari
Mera pachak hai panchlona
Jisko khate Shiam Salona
Churan bana masaledar
Jisme Khatte ki bahar
Mera churan jo koi khai
Mujhko chhor kahin na jai*

(This Churan, a digestive powder, has been prepared according to the prescription of a great Vaid. It is taken by Krishna Murari. It has five salts in it. It is taken by Shiam. It is prepared by mixing several spices and the deliciousness of *khatta* in it is worth noting. Whoever takes my churan will never leave me).

Some other writers of Bharatendu Yug,

to name, were Badri Narain Premghan, Pratap Narain Mishra, Lala Sri Niwas Das, Bal Krishna Bhatt, Radha Krishna Das and Kashi Nath Khatri. None of them wrote especially for children but some of their writings were appreciated by children also. Sri Niwas Das's *Prahlad Bhakt* became quite popular with children on account of its theme and dialogue written in simple Hindi. Bal Krishna Bhatt's humorous articles on simple subjects such as an ear, an eye, a nose, were also liked by children.

By the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, the modern period began in the history of Hindi literature. Pandit Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi took up the editorship of *Saraswati* a monthly brought out by the Indian Press, Allahabad, in 1903 and that was the beginning of a new era called Dwivedi Yug. He not only improved the language but set standards of writing both prose and poetry by encouraging the writers. His own contribution to children's literature is of no less importance, as he himself wrote *Bal Ramayana*, *Bal Mahabharata* and *Bal Bhagwat* and prompted the managing directors of the Indian Press to bring out a children's monthly magazine named *Bal Sakha*.

Pt. Sridhar Pathak (1860-1928) is the most important poet of the period who did original writings especially for children. His poems in easily understandable language on subjects such as a parrot, a peacock, a cuckoo, a cat, a dog, etc., familiar to children, are as fresh today as when they were written. A collection of those poems was published as a part under the title *Bal Vilas* in his book *Manovinod* in the year 1917.

Other important writers for children of this modern period were Bal Mukund Gupta, Maithli Saran Gupta, Kamta Prasad Guru, Ayodhya Singh Upadhyaya, Ramji Lal Sharma, Sudarshanacharya, Mannan

Dwivedi Gajpuri, Sukharan Chaube Gunakar, Sukh Dev Prasad Chaube, Ram Naresh Tripathi, Vidya Bhushan Vibhu, Girja Dutt Girish, Murari Lal Sharma, Devi Prasad Gupta Kusumakar, Th. Sri Nath Singh, Shambhoo Dayal Saxena, and others.

Bal Mukund Gupta's *Khel Tamasha* and *Khilona*, Ayodhya Singh Upadhyay's *Chandra Khilona* and *Khel Tamasha*, Ram Naresh Tripathi's *Mohan Mala* and *Vanar Sangeet*, Vidya Bhushan Vibhu's *Chanda*, *Babua*, *Khel Khilona*, *Gobar Ganesh* and *Dhapor Shanka*, Sri Nath Singh's *Khelghar* and *Pipahari*, Shambhoo Dayal Saxena's *Bal Kavita wali* and *Aa ri Nidia* and Murari Lal Sharma's *Godi Bhare Lal* and *Sangeet Sudha* are some of the books of outstanding merit written in the Dwivedi Yug, though many of these books could see the light of the day much later.

Poems by some of the poets though not published in book form were quite popular with children. A few to mention are Maithli Saran Gupta's *Circus aur Ola*, Kamta Prasad Guru's *Chhari*, and Mannan Dwivedi Gujpur's *Eesh Vinai* and *Matri Bhumi*.

Bal Hitkar is said to be the first children's monthly magazine published from Lucknow. But it was so short-lived that it did not leave any impact. Then in 1906 *Chhatra Hitaishi* was brought out from Aligarh. Pt. Kishori Lal Goswami brought out *Bal Prabhakar* from Banaras. *Vidyarthi* monthly, brought out in 1914, was by far the best children's magazine; almost all the important poets and writers of those days contributed to it.

In the same year, another children's magazine *Bal Manoranjan* was published from Agar (Malwa) under the editorship of Ganesh Dutt Sharma 'Indra'. But it continued only for a year or so. In 1915, Pt. Sudarshanacharya brought out *Shishu*, a well illustrated monthly magazine for the younger age group of children. It was very popular with children and continued

its publication till 1950. It was ably edited and carefully printed and has been a landmark in the history of children's journals in Hindi. Its editor-publisher, Sudarshanacharya, himself was a good children's writer. *Daloo aur Malloo*, *Nani Ki Kahanian* and *Bachchoo Ka Biah* are three of his well-known story books.

In 1916, *Balak* monthly was brought out by Ram Lochan Sharma from Patna. It is still continuing its publication. It has the distinction of bringing several children's writers to light. But it could not be so popular as *Balsakha*, brought out by the Indian Press, Allahabad the very next year under the editorship of Badri Nath Bhatt. As one writer has put it, "If *Shishu* helped children's literature in Hindi to stand on its own feet, *Balsakha* helped it to move on." Like *Saraswati*, it set standards of writing and encouraged a number of children's writers. Pt. Lalli Prasad Pande was associated with it from the beginning and continued to be its editor for a long time. We can call him the Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi of children's literature. Its publication was continued till 1968, when it was suddenly discontinued.

Other important children's magazines brought out before independence were *Khilona* in 1926 by Pt. Raghunandan Sharma, *Kumar* in 1932 by Suresh Singh of Kalakankar. *Cham Cham* in 1930 by Ganga Prasad Upadhyaya, Allahabad, *Banar* in 1931 by Ram Naresh Tripathi, Allahabad, *Bal Vinod* in 1933 by Ganga Pustak Mala, Lucknow, *Balhit* in 1937 by Vidya Bhawan Society, Udaipur, and *Hamare Balak* in 1942 by Ram Krishna Sharma, Delhi.

Some of the most outstanding and popular books in prose written for children after 1930 in Hindi are Baboo Lal Bhargava's *Bal Katha*, Lomri Rani and *Parion Ka Darbar*; Zahur Buksh's *Kapas Ka Janm*, *Jhopri Ke Lal* and *Phoolpari*; Pooran Lal Srivastava's *Satvan Neel* and *Bhamriha*

Pipal; Lajja Shankar Jha's *Sat Kahaniyan* and *Lal Asharfiwala*; Prem Chand's *Kutte Ki Kahani* and *Jangal Ki Kahaniyan*. In poetry some of the best known books were Swarna Sahodar's '*Chagan Magan, Ginti Ke Geet, Nat Khat Ham*'; Subhadra Kumari Chauhan's *Sabha Ka Khel*; Ram Singhasan Sahai's *Madhur Bachchon Ke Geet*; Sohan Lal Dwivedi's *Bal Bharati, Shishu Bharati* and *Bigul*; Bal Bhadra Prasad Gupta Rasik's *Mani Mala*; Devi Dayal Chaturvedi Mast's *Meethi Tane* and *Jhilmil Tare*; Gauri Shankar Lahri's *Titli Ke Pankh*; Rama Pati Shukla's *Angooron Ka Guchchha* and *Hua Savera*; Ram Kumar Verma's *Shishu Shiksha*; Arsi Prasad Singh's *Chanda Mama*. Some of these books, though written earlier were published after independence.

Other important children's writers of this period were Jyoti Prasad Misra Nir-mal, Viswa Prakash Kusum, Ram Dev Singh Kaladhar, Rameshwar Dayal Dube, Abdul Rehman Sagari, Sumitra Kumari Sinha, Satya Prakash Kulshreshtha, Prah-lad Narain Raizada, Rameshwar Guru Kumar-Hridya, Mool Chand Srivatri and Vidya Bhaskar Shukla.

It is true that many reputed and well-established writers during this period were attracted towards writing for children. But what prompted them to do so was a feeling of pity that there was no literature worth the name for children in Hindi and therefore, something must be written for them also. Their idea was that it should be in simple language and on subjects that could be understood by children. The quality of writing was not important. The purpose of writing was to educate children in the tradition of old Indian culture, of which they were so proud, to encourage character-building and a spirit of nationalism, truthfulness and self-sacrifice. Children were regarded as a dependent people who could act only as elders wished. They had no independent

status in society. The personality of a child was not recognised and no attempt was made by the writers to look at things from the child's point of view and help him develop his personality in his own way by their writings. They did write interesting and amusing stories and poems, but the idea behind these was always to make them grow as the elders wished.

The Second World War in 1939, was considered by our national leaders to be an opportunity to assert the freedom of the Indian people from British domination. The war also provided an opportunity to the people of India to come in contact with the ideas, culture, philosophies and ways of life of people of other countries of the world. Their outlook on life was widened. Indian writers with this new outlook started thinking about re-shaping things in their own country. After the war, India became independent in 1947 and the whole atmosphere changed.

Children's Literature since Independence

Independence gave a new impetus to the growth and development of children's literature in Hindi. Hindi was declared the national language. Many a writer and publisher made a conscious effort to raise the standard of books in order to compete with the world's best published children's books. There was all-round progress. All kinds of books of nonsense rhymes, lullabies, songs, short stories, novels, dramas, biographies and scientific fictions were being written and published. According to an assessment made by the All India Hindi Publishers Association, by the end of the 1950s, next to novels and story books for adults, children's books were found to be the best sellers. Yet, in comparison with the demand of the increasing number of school-going children, with the spread of compulsory primary education in the vast Hindi-speaking areas of Uttar

Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Rajasthan, Haryana and other parts of the country, that assessment of sale was a poor consolation.

The largest number of books that have been produced during this post-independence period are story books. Along with a lot of stories based on Pauranic, mythological, historical and classical literature in the old traditional style, quite a large number of stories based on every-day experiences of a child and on scientific subjects have been written.

Pauranic, Mythological and Historical Literature: Some examples are: Viraj M.A.'s *Gai Aur Bagh*, Gokul Chand Sant's *Veerata Ki Amar Kahaniyan*; Narsingh Shukla's *Hamare Purkhe*; Prashant's *Itihas Ke Panne*; and Balidan Ki *Kahaniyan*; Vyathit Hridaya's *Rashtriya Ekta Ki Prerak Kahaniyan*; Raj Bahadur Singh's *Tapasino Ki Kahaniyan*; Shambhu Dayal Saxena's *Devataon Ki Kahaniyan*; Narain Vyas's *Ramayan Ki Vibhutipan* and Vishambhar Sahai Premi's books and stories from the *Ramayan* and *Mahabharat*. There is nothing original in them. They are only a reproduction of old stories told to children. **Fairy-tales:** Sharda Misra's *Neelpari*, and *Masehri Ki Didi*, Hari Krishna Devsare's *Nayee Pari Kathayen* Shiv Murti Vatas's *Sunehri Machhli*; and Manhar Chauhan's *Rang Birangi Parian* are some of the fairy-tales for children.

Recently a controversy has arisen amongst writers whether fairy-tales should be given to children at all. Dr. Hari Krishna Devsare and Dr. Mast Ram Kapur are the two main contenders. Dr. Devsare is of the view that fairy tales make children daydreamers and, therefore, they should be avoided, while Dr. Kapur's contention is that they have been so popular with children from time immemorial that they cannot be avoided. They can however be made more and more realistic.

Science Fiction: Examples of Hindi

science fiction for children are: Ramesh Verma's *Sindoori Grah Ki Yatra*; Mala Ram Vafa's *Chand Ki Yatra*; Dev Kumar Misra's *Bimar Chana*; Ratna Prakash Sheel's *Samudra Men Sao Din*; Jai Prakash Bharati's *Barf Ki Gudia* and *Chandra Lok Ki Sair*; Sharda Misra's *Mangal Grah Men Razia* and *Globe Kanya*; Prakash Pandit's *Chand Ka Safar*; Santosh Narain Nautiyal's *Chanda Mama Ka Desh*; Ram Chand Tiwari's *Pani Bola* and *Dharti Mata*; Narendra Dhir's *Antriksh Ka Yatri*. Children like such stories which are useful to them.

Stories of Everyday

The stories children like most are those which deal with their own experiences of life. Such stories help them in solving their psychological problems and making them wiser. Children need such stories, particularly in the context of the great industrial and scientific progress made in modern times and the changing values in life. Quite a large number of such story books have been written during this period. Some worth mentioning are: Qudsia Zaidi's *Albeli Bachhia*; Bal Bandhu's *Hathi Dada*; Ramesh Bhai's *Natkhat Poossi*; Shiv Murti Singh Vat's *Natkhat Memna*; Manorama Malaviya's *Birbal Ka Beta*; Shakuntala Mishra's *Sookha Santara*; Sumitra Kumari Sinha's *Katha Kunj*; Ashok Sahityalankar's *Sonchiraiya*; Narain Prasad Arora's or Angootha Ram; Bal Krishna M.A.'s *Ek Khaon Do Khaon* and *Main Chhabbo Ka*; Shirish's *Bolti Kahaniyan*; Durga Prasad Shukla's *Artoo Sartoo*; Shashi Prabha Shastri's *Phool aur Sapna*; Manmath Gupta's *Thag Nagri Ka Thag*; Rajendra Awasthi's *Lal Roshanian*; Vishnu Prabhakar's *Babooji Barat Mein*; Shakuntala Sirothia's *Jangli Janwaron Ke Beech Akeli Ladki*; Manhar Chauhan's *Apne Apko Saza*; Manohar Varma's *Pyari Bitia Dharti Par Ayee*; Prayag Shukla's *Pankhon Wale Kapre*;

Malti Joshi's *Dadi Ki Ghari*; Shivani's *Uncle Bhoot*; and Manhar Chauhan's *Sher Bachcha*.

Some of the writers indicative of this new trend in the writing of stories for children are Mahip Singh, Avtar Singh, Hari Krishna Tailang, Devesh Thakur, Rajesh Jain, Veer Kumar Adheer and Sheela Indra.

In 1975-76 a point was raised by Kanhaiya Lal Nandan, editor of *Parag* magazine for children, that stories of kings and queens represent the old feudal outlook and are against the spirit of democratic freedom and, therefore, they should not be given to children. The English daily, *The Statesman* in one of its editorials, supported this view. Dr. Devsare also holds that these stories about supermen are no more needed. But there are writers including Jai Prakash Bharati, Editor of *Nandan* who do not agree with this view.

Stories selected from folk-tales of India and other countries of the world are also available to children in Hindi. Ramesh Chandra's *Viswa Lok Kathayen* in five parts is a very good selection of such stories. Atma Ram and Sons, Delhi has published folk stories of all the Indian states and of France, Germany, Russia, America, England, Japan, Ireland, Italy, China, Iran, Egypt, Arabia and other countries of the world.

Novels for Children

A novel for children is only a long story in which the curiosity of the reader is sustained for a longer period of time. Writing of novels for children in Hindi started several years after Independence. Bhoop Narain Dixit's *Khar Khar Dev* was perhaps the first novel published serially in *Balsakha* monthly in the year 1952. Thereafter Ayodhya Prasad Jha's *Lal Putla* was published in *Kishore* monthly, Patna, in 1957. Manhar Chauhan's

Jadoogar Kabir, a Hindi rendering of a Gujarati children's novel published in *Hindustan Saptahik* in 1957, was very much liked by children.

Some other original children's novels which are liked by children are: Himanshu Srivastava's *Chanda Mama Door Ke*; Krishna Chandra's *Khargosh Ka Sapna* and *Uta Vraksh*; Satya Prakash Aggrawal's *Ek Dar Panch Nidar*; Prashant's *Sunahla Hiran* and *Jado Ki Tehni*; Lakshmi Narain Lal's *Hari Ghati*; Shanti Bhatnagar's *Ma Ka Anchal*; Sri Krishna's *Paharon Ke Uspar*; Devendra Kumar's *Nani Ma Ka Mahal*; Manohar Verma's *Pilpili Bahadur*; Mast Ram Kapur's *Heeru Neeru*; Mudra Rakshas's *Chentipuram Ke Bhure Lal*; Bhagwat Saran Upadhyay's *Sakka Aur Shera*; Radhey Shyam Pragalb's *Shahi Hakim*; Ram Kumar Bhramar's *Dakuon Ke Beech*; and Vibha Devsare's *Shani Lok*.

All the important story books from world literature, such as *Robinson Crusoe*, *Gulliver's Travels*, *Alice in Wonderland*, *Sindbad the Sailor*, and *Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves*, have been translated in Hindi.

Verse for Children

Some of the books of stories in verse which have been liked by children are Nirankar Dev Sewak's *Panch Tantri*, Aesop's *Geet Kathayen*, and *Matar Ke Dane*; Ram Vachan Singh Anand's *Angloo Mangloo*; Chiranjit's *Ek Tha Raja Ek Thi Rani*; Shakuntala Sirothia's *Geeton Bhari Kahanian*; Shankar Sultanpuri's *Bano Bharat Sam Bhai*; Chandra Pal Mayank's *Bandar Ki Dulhan*; Vishukant Pande's *Nanhi Indu Bani Indira*.

All said and done, Hindi has yet to produce a fiction writer like Hans Andersen, Lewis Carroll, or Tolstoi.

Next to story books, the largest number of books for children are of poems. Bar-

ring a few, most of the poets in the pre-Independence days did purposive writing even if the purpose was to please the children. But after Independence there were several poets who were able to catch the very spirit of children. They had better understanding of the child. The diction and craftsmanship also improved. Some of the poems written during this period have become very popular and are such as can be placed with the best children's poems in world literature.

Shakuntala Sirothia, Subhadra Kumari Chauhan, Shyam Narain Pandey Shiksharthi, Bachchan, Dwarka Prasad Maheswari, Chandrapal Singh Yadav 'Mayank', Ram Vachan Singh, Anand, Vishnu Kant Pande, Vinod Chandra Pande, Dharampal Shastri, Rashtra Bandhu, Sarveshwar Dayal Saxena, Sri Prasad, Prayag Sukla, Narain Lal Parmar, Sherjang Garg, Surya Bhan Gupta, Surya Kumar Pande and Nirankar Dev Sewak are some of the popular poets of the day.

Besides there are Chiranjit, Kapil, Radhey Shiam Saxena 'Rasikesh,' Brij Kishore Narain, Shanti Agarwal, Prem Narain Gaur, Krishna Kant Tailang, Viswa Dev Sharma, Devendra Dutt Tewari, Ashok Ranjan Saxena, Horilal Sharma, Ashok M.A., Ramesh Kaushik, Harish Chandra, Bal Sarup 'Rahi', Karuna Shankar 'Karunesh', Om Prakash Singhal, Vishnu Kumar Tripathi 'Rakesh', Uma Kant Malaviya, Balkishan Garg and others who have made remarkable contributions in the field of poetry books for children.

Some of the important books of poems for children written in this period are Shakuntala Sirothia's *Ga Le Munna*; Dwarka Prasad Maheswari's *Bal Geetayan*; Brij Kishore Narain's *Tak Dhina Dhin*; Shanti Aggrawal's *Bal Veena*; Krishna Kant Tailang's *Mauj Maje*; Vishnu Kant Pande's *Meethe Meethe Piare Geet* and *Sab Geeton Se Niare Geet*; Vinod Chandra Pande's *Gilahari*; Devendra Dutt Tiwari's *Phuljhari*;

Hori Lal Sharma Nirav's *Ajo Rajo*; Sarveshwar Dayal Saxena's *Batuta Ke Juta*; Sri Prasad's *Jhilmil Tare*, Ramesh Kaushik's *Ham Hain Chand Sitare*; Prayag Shukla's *Aye Badal*; Bachchan's *Janm Din Ki Bhent*; Bal Sarup Rahi's *Dadi Amma Mujhe Batao*; Surya Kumar Pande's *Geet Tumhare*; Chandrapal Singh Yadav Mayank's *Sair Sapate*; Bhavani Prasad Mishra's *Tukon Ka Khel*; Karuna Shankar Karunesh's *Mohan Balgeet*; Shiksharthi's *Kilkari* and Nirankar Dev Sewak's *Rim-jhim*, *Doodh Jalebi*, *Nanhe Munne Geet* and *Billo Ke Geet*.

There are some other poets who are of no less importance and whose contributions cannot be lost sight of while writing the history of children's literature in Hindi. They are Sant Ram Vatsya, Saraswati Kumar Deepak, Ramavatar Chetan, Sita Ram Gupta, Rajeshwar Guru, Ram Dhari Singh Dinkar, Ram Krishna Sharma Khadarji, Tribhuvan Nath and others.

Drama for Children

It was only in the post-Independence period that the attention of writers was drawn towards writing plays specially for children. Narmada Prasad Misra of Jabalpur had published a collection of 51 plays in Hindi by the name of *Saral Natak Mala* for being staged by students on the occasion of their annual functions. But they were not actually meant for children. The *Modern Review* monthly had written about it — 'Just a few of the dramas will not do for quite young students, but there is no objection to their being played by and before college students.'

Narmada Prasad Khare brought out a book *Naveen Natak Mala* in two parts in 1952 and it was perhaps the first book of plays for children. Keshav Chandra Verma's *Bachchon Ki Kachehry*, published in 1956, and Qudsia Zaidi's *Chacha Chhakkan Ke Drame*, published in 1957,

are two humorous drama books for children. In 1962, Yogendra Kumar Lalla and Srikrishna brought out two good collections of children's plays, called *Bal Ekanki* and *Rashtriya Ekanki*; one-act plays written by Mangal Saxena, Vimla Luthra, Anand Prakash Jain, Ved Rahi, Chiranjit, Dev Raj Dinesh, Vibha Devsare, Vishnu Prabhakar, Saraswati Kumar 'Deepak' and others. These two books are a landmark in the history of children's drama in Hindi.

During the Chinese invasion of India in 1962, the whole nation was throbbing with a spirit of patriotism and a strong sense of unity amongst the people. To depict it, several plays for children were written. A few of these are: Manohar Verma's *Ham Sab Ek Hain*; Balak Ram Nagar's *Sahyog*; Kamleshwar's *Ham Ek Hain*; Radhey Shyam Pragalb's *Rah Anek Manzil Ek*; Anand Prakash Jain's *Bachat Andolan* and Saraswati Kumar Deepak's *Bal Niketan*.

Besides these, Chiranjit's *Gudia Ka Raj*; Kamleshwar's *Paison Ka Per*; Ghansham Goel's *Jyotish Ka Chamatkar*; Vishnu Prabhakar's *Hartal, Bahadur Beta*; Naresh Mehta's *Siddharth Ka Grih Tyag*; Manmath Nath Gupta's *Terhi Ungli*; Satyendra Sharat's *Majedar Mamaji*; Mast Ram Kapur's *Chakma and Chor*; Hari Krishna Devsare's *Bal Sansad*; Rekha Jain's *Apsara Ka Tohfa, Thapp Roti Thapp Dal* and *Diwali Ke Patakhe*; Sarveshwar Dayal Saxena's *Bhon Bhon Khon Khon* and *Lakh Ki Nak*; Laxmi Narain Lal's *Billi Ke Khel* and K.R. Saxena's *Talash Arjun Ki* and *Choncho Nawab* are some of the plays which have been quite popular with children.

Some of the other important playwrights for children are Vyathit Hridaya, Paritosh Gargi, Raghubir Saran Mitra, Keshav Dube, Govind Sharma, Dev Vati Sharma, Ramesh Bhai and Viswa Dev Sharma.

Rameshwar Dayal Dube, Umakant Malaviya and some others have written

some plays in verse also.

Drama is useful for children to direct their natural tendency to imitate, stories and poems provide food for thought and imagination, but in staging plays, they can see what they feel within.

Biography for Children

Biographies of great men and women can be regarded as an important part of children's literature from the education point of view also. They not only tell about experiences in the lives of great men but also inspire children to become like them when they grow up. Biography for children must be factual, therefore it is not always an easy job for a writer to get facts and write them in such a manner that the reader's interest is sustained all through.

We find a gradual development in the scope and style of writing biographies for children in Hindi since Independence. Until the 1950 there were very few biographies, and those too were of *paucanica* and historical personalities. Some examples! Rajendra Singh's *Sant Kabir*; Jai Chand Vidyalankar's *Purkhon Ke Charit*; Mukand Dev Sharma's *Krishna Dwaipayan Vyas*; Baldeo Prasad Shukla's *Desh Deepak* and Yashpal Jain's *Teerathankar Mahavir*.

In the biographies written by the end of the 1950s and the beginning of the 1960s, we notice a remarkable change both in the subject matter and style of writing. Books on memoirs and events of the lives of great men were also written. In *Jab Ye Bachche The* by Bal Krishna, published in 1959, incidents of childhood of some great men were described. Some events of Mahatma Gandhi's life showing his benevolence, bravery and fearlessness are described in Vishnu Prabhakar's book '*Bapu Ki Baten*' published in 1960. People's Publishing House, Delhi, published *Bal Jeewan Mala*, a series of books includ-

ing biographies of Darwin, Madam Curie, Jagdish Chandra Bose and others. *Naveen Bharat Ke Nirmata*, published by Publications Division of the Government of India, contain biographies of 17 nation builders and is a book of outstanding merit.

Kasturba by Radhey Shiam Pragalbh; *Hindi Sahitya Ke Sitare* (containing biographies of Kabir, Mira, Sur, Tulsi, Rahim, Bhartendu, Prem Chand etc.) by Anant; *Pratibha Ke Putra* (containing biographies of Isaac Newton, Bernard Shaw, Sigmund Freud, Abraham Lincoln, Henry Ford etc.), by Ved Mitra; *Jai Bhavani* by Manhar Chauhan; *Karna* by Sudarshan Chopra; *Guru Tegh Bahadur Singh* by Rajesh Sharma; *Chandra Gupta Vikramaditya* by Prakash Nagayaeh; *Shanti Doot Nehru* by Virendra Mohan Raturi; *Inka Bachpan Yon Biti* (containing some sketches of the childhood days of Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel, Pt. Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, Tilak, Subhash Chandra Bose and other national leaders) and *Bhagat Singh* by Jai Prakash Bharati, and biographies of Jagdish Chandra Bose, Prafulla Chandra Ray, Megh Nath Saha and others by Shiam Narain Kapur are some of the important books written during these years.

This part of children's literature has been greatly enriched during 1970 from every point of view — writing, printing and production. Important books of biographies written during this decade are *Azadi Ke Paharedaron Mein* by Satya Narain Sinha, with life-sketches of military chiefs since Independence; *Sansar Ke Prasad Khilari* by Yograj Thani; *Jai Hind* by Radhey Shiam Pragalbh; *Rahim and Amir Khusro* by Hari Krishna Devsare; *Maharana Pratap* by Bankey Bihari Bhatnagar, *Chanakya* by Veerendra Gupta and *Bharat Ke Gaurav* in eight parts, containing biographies of great men of India from all walks of life, published by the Publications Division, Government of India.

Biographies for children should not be

written with a view to inculcate hero worship by depicting men as supermen and gods. Biographies of ordinary human beings are also useful for them if they are written interestingly.

Non-fiction for Children

Children have an insatiable urge to know all about everything. Books of knowledge, therefore, are a necessity for them. A writer of such books must not only possess full, up-to-date knowledge but to convey it in a manner understandable and interesting to children.

Before 1960, practically no such book was available for children in Hindi. Then Rajpal & Sons published a series of 18 books under the series title *Gyan Vigyan Pustakmala*. Some of the titles in this series are: *Samudra Ki Kahani*, *Atom Ki Kahani*, *Avishkaron Ki Kahani* etc. Naresh VEDI's *Vigyan Ka Adbhut Sansar* is a translation of the famous book 'Your Wonderful World of Science' giving scientific information on the creation of earth and the universe. Rajeshwar Narain Singh in his book *Hamare Vanya Pashu* published in 1962, has written about the wild animals found in India in simple language. Suresh Singh's book *Janvaron Ka Jagat* is also on the same subject. Vyathit Hridaya, the well-known fiction writer, has also written some books of knowledge for children: *Pani aur Hamare Jeevan*, *Awaz Ki Kahani* and *Andhere Ka Shatru*. Sri Krishan's book *Tum Poocho Ham Batayen* is also a good book to satisfy the simple curiosity of children. In Ramesh Prabhakar's *Keeron Ki Vichitra Duniya*, interesting scientific knowledge has been provided about insects. Shiksha Bharati, Delhi, has published translations of the How and Why Wonder Books in a series under the titles of *Hawai Jahaz*, *Mausam*, *Sitare*, *Bijli*, *Hamara Shareer* etc. Other important books of knowledge for children are

Dr. Govind Chatak's *Aao Kiari Banayen*, Ved Mitra's *Dharati Ki Daulat*; Yogendra Kumar Lalla's *Khel Bhi Vigyan Bhi*, Manohar Lal Verma's *Vigyan Ke Jadoo* and A. Karen's *Rail Ki Sair*; Sant Ram Vats's *Paudhon Ki Kahani*, *Pani Ki Kahani*, *Hava Ki Kahani*; Shukh Dev Dube's *Sarpon Ka Sansar*; Pramod Shankar Bhatt's *Samudra Par Vijai* and *Pandubbi*; Mir Nazakat Ali's *Visva Ko Badal Dene Wale Avishkar*; Gunakar Mule's *Saurmandal*; Avtar Singh's *Vigyan Ki Ankh* and Shakun Jain's *Jar Ki Bat*.

It is unfortunate that no children's encyclopaedia has so far been published in Hindi. It is a big job, no doubt, but it can be undertaken either by a big publishing house or a body like National Council for Educational Research and Training, Sahitya Academy or Hindi Sansthan of Uttar Pradesh. Rajpal & Sons had published a *Visva Kosh* in ten volumes but it was not as good as the children's encyclopaedias prepared in Bengali, Tamil or Oriya. *Gyan Sarovar* in five volumes, published by the Publications Division, Government of India, is of course a book of knowledge worth the name.

Until 1947, children's literature in Hindi was considered so insignificant that no mention of it is found in any history or appreciation of Hindi literature. In 1954 and thereafter I wrote some articles on children's literature in *Veena* monthly of Indore and the *Shiksha* quarterly of the Education Department of UP. Thereafter my book *Balgeet Sahitya* was published in 1966. It contained articles on different aspects of children's literature. This attracted the attention of scholars for further study. After that four research scholars Dr. Hari Krishna Devsare from Jabalpur University, Dr. Rashtra Bandhu from Saugar University, Dr. Mast Ram Kapur from Kashi Vidyapeeth and Dr. Jyoti Swarup from Agra University have obtained their doctorates in children's literature. Three more scholars at Raipur, Calcutta

and Meerut Universities are carrying on research work on different aspects of children's literature in Hindi.

Magazines for Children

Magazines play a great part in cultivating the reading habit in children. Since Independence, a number of children's magazines have been brought out. *Parag* monthly a Times of India publication, is popular with children. Its first editor was Kamini Kaushal. Kanhiya Lal Nandan is the present editor. *Nandan* monthly, a Hindustan Times publication, has the largest circulation. Its editor, Jai Prakash Bharati, is a well-known writer himself. *Bal Bharati* monthly is a Government of India publication. It is also liked by children. Besides these, *Champak* fortnightly of Delhi Press and *Mela** fortnightly of the Anand Bazar Patrika group of papers and *Chanda Mama* monthly which is published in several other Indian languages.

There were some other magazines, namely *Jewan Shisha* (monthly) Varanasi, *Raja Bhaiya* (monthly) Delhi, *Chunno Munno* Patna, *Sher Bachcha* Calcutta, *Shishu Sandesh* Lucknow *Bal Jagat* Lucknow, *Balman** Delhi, *Chanda Jabalpur*, *Nanhi Dunia* Dehra Dun and *Bal Shiksha* Lucknow, which were brought out after Independence. There are two weeklies — *Bachchon Ka Akhbar* from Indore and *Madhu Muskan* from Delhi. *Dharamyug* and *Saptahik Hindustan*, the two most popular weeklies for adults, reserve two pages for children in every issue. All the leading dailies, such as *Nav Bharat Times*, *Hindustan*, *Aaj*, *Amar Ujala* and *Jagran* give one full page for children in their weekly edition. A monthly magazine, *Bal Sahitya Samiksha*, is being brought out by Dr. Rashtra

*(Publication discontinued).

Bandhu of Kanpur for the purpose of reviewing children's literature.

Illustrations in Books for Children

Books and magazines if not printed with pictures, designs and illustrations specially drawn for children, have no attraction for them. In pre-Independence days, there were no such facilities of press, printing, block-making, etc. as are available now. Of the innumerable publishers of children's books, Indian Press (Allahabad) Misra Bandhu Prakashan (Jabalpur), Rajpal & Sons (Delhi), Atma Ram & Sons (Delhi), Raj Kamal Prakashan (Delhi), Saraswati Prakashan (Mathura), Shakun

Prakashan (Delhi), Hindi Pracharak Sansthan (Varanasi), Children's Book Trust (Delhi), National Book Trust (Delhi), Parag Prakashan (Delhi) and others have published well-illustrated attractive children's books. Like the writers, the artists and designers of children's books should also specialize in their job.

Production of children's books is a concerted effort of the writer, the artist and the editor. In Hindi there is no such concerted work. Editors do not know their job, artists are commercialised and writers are dissatisfied with the publishers. Children's literature in Hindi is still in its infancy and will take at least a few more decades to reach maturity.